Effective Community Health Worker Programs: Critical Inputs for Supportive Systems

December 14, 2021

Today's Speakers

Senator Bob Casey
(D-PA)
United States Senate

Peggy O'Kane
President
NCQA

Martha Chavis
CEO/President
Camden Area Health Education Center
(AHEC)

Cheryl Garfield
Community Health Worker
Penn Center for Community
Health Workers

Brea Burke
Community Health Worker
Ballad Health

Chethan Bachireddy, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Virginia Medicaid

Penn Medicine

NCQA

Remarks from Peggy O'Kane

Overview

Community health workers (CHWs) are essential members of the health workforce

Evidence shows that CHWs can improve outcomes and reduce costs

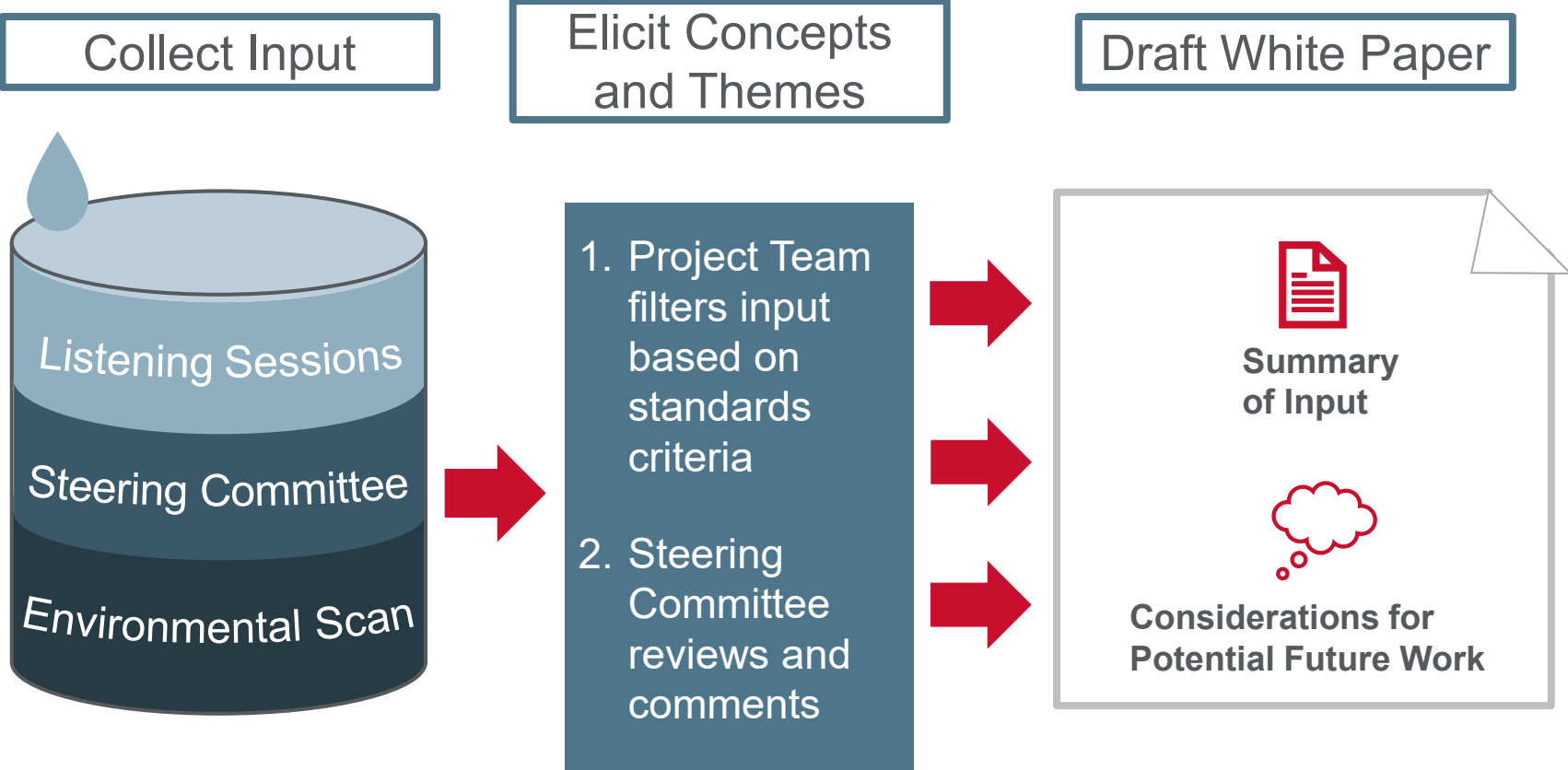Federal, state & local interest in CHW services is growing

Recent unprecedented investment in CHW workforce

What does it mean to be a community health worker?

Process Review & Project Update

Collect Input

- Listening Sessions
- Steering Committee
- Environmental Scan

Elicit Concepts and Themes

1. Project Team filters input based on standards criteria

2. Steering Committee reviews and comments

Draft White Paper

Summary of Input

Considerations for Potential Future Work

Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Overview of Concepts

Recruitment & Hiring of CHWs

Training for CHWs

Supervision for CHWs

Support for CHWs

CHW Scope of Work

CHW Workforce Development

Health/Social Care Team Integration

Organizational Data Systems & Engagement

Program Sustainability

Penn Medicine

NCQA

Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Concepts & Themes

Recruitment & Hiring of CHWs

- CHW qualities and qualifications
- Recruitment process
- Hiring process

Training for CHWs

- Initial/pre-service training
- Continuous training process
- General training methods, content and evaluation

Supervision for CHWs

- Supervisor qualities and qualifications
- Supervisor role
- Structure and process of supervision
- Training, support and evaluation of supervisor

Penn Medicine

NCQA

Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Concepts & Themes

Support for CHWs

- Job aids, resources and supplies
- Documentation tools
- Safety and emergency protocols and resources
- Peer support
- Community health worker well-being

CHW Scope of Work

- CHW role and responsibilities
- Flexible, person-centered work practices and manageable caseload

CHW Workforce Development

- Performance assessment
- Career ladder
- Pay and incentives, awards and recognition

Penn Medicine

NCQA

Critical Inputs for Successful CHW Programs

Concepts & Themes

Health/Social Care Team Integration

- Define and recognize CHW role with team members
- Organizational commitment and process to link health and social care

Organizational Data Systems & Engagement

- Data systems for quality improvement
- Community health worker engagement engagement
- Community-centered care and engagement

Program Sustainability

- Program evaluation and improvement
- Financial sustainability

An intensive CHW support intervention (six-month engagement with per patient cost of $1700) achieved a **$2.47** return on **every dollar** invested.

Kangovi, S.; Mitra, N.; Grande, D.; Long, J. A.; Asch, D. A. Evidence-Based Community Health Worker Program Addresses Unmet Social Needs And Generates Positive Return On Investment. Health Affairs 2020, 39 (2), 207–213. https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2019.00981.

Penn Medicine

NCQA

Principles for Building Standards

Honor CHW self-determination & leadership

Authentic CHW engagement

Allow sufficient time

Representation of diverse stakeholders

Penn Medicine

NCQA

Summary

- CHW-led interventions can lead to *improved outcomes*

- There has been *growing interest* in employing CHWs and *unprecedented investment* in the CHW workforce

- Using a *participatory, consensus driven process* we identified critical inputs for successful CHW programs

- *Sustainable financing* is needed to ensure successful CHW programs

- Incorporate principles for building standards such as *honoring CHW self-determination* into future efforts

Penn Medicine

NCQA